

Moran Works to Better Fund Special Education

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced his sponsorship of legislation designed to fully fund the federal government's obligation to special education. H.R. 3145, The Mandatory IDEA Full Funding Compromise Act, would incrementally increase the amount of funding for special education until the government pays its full 40 percent share, by 2010.

"The lack of adequate federal funding places an unfair burden on local school districts struggling to meet the education needs of all students, including a growing number of students with special needs," Moran said. "As Kansas struggles to come up with court-ordered state funding, the federal government needs to make sure it is doing its part. This legislation would set an achievable deadline by which the government would have to fund special ed as originally promised."

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), passed in 1975, the federal government agreed to pay 40 percent of the additional cost of educating students with disabilities, however, has never fulfilled that obligation. Since coming to Congress, Moran has worked to almost triple federal funding for special education, from 7.3 percent in 1996 to 18.6 percent in 2005. This legislation would take the current funding level and gradually increase it over the next five years until it reaches the promised 40 percent level.

"Despite the shortage in special education funding, Kansas has great schools and does a tremendous job teaching our children," Moran said. "It's long past time for the federal government to fulfill its commitment to our dedicated special education professionals."

Moran has been an aggressive advocate for Kansas education, voting against No Child Left Behind for fear it would place unnecessary restrictions on Kansas classrooms. Since its passage, however, he has worked with state and federal officials and has sponsored legislation to provide Kansas teachers and school districts with greater flexibility in complying with No Child Left Behind.

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